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we might insist that nothing prevents interpreting this to mean not only chemical but biological analysis. Thus, the law permits and makes prominent mention of the study of plants in their manifold relations to economic problems, and it remains to be seen if those who carry out its provisions will act as wisely in this regard as the framers of the law have done. No station can give facilities for the pursuance of every line of work contemplated by the law, and those that do a few things well are likely to work more good for the country and bring more credit to themselves than those that scatter their resources among many subjects. Of the things to be done well, the broad and fertile fields of vegetable physiology, pathology and bacteriology offer great expectations of economic and scientific gain to the stations and men who enter them fully equipped for research, and through them to the people at large.

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## OPEN LETTERS.

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### Typha.

I am surprised that Mr. Morong, in his interesting article on Typha, in the *Bull. Bot. Club*, p. 4, 1888, does not mention, under the heading of *uses*, the use of the leaves of these plants in cooperage. In some localities the collecting of these leaves is quite an industry. They are collected, dried in the shade, bound into bundles, and sent to market. When used they are split in halves through the broad diameter, and placed between the joints of headings, and of the staves near the headings. I find, on inquiry, that this is the almost universal method for making tight-work, not only in this country but also in Europe. J. SCHNECK.

*Mt. Carmel, Ill.*

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### An odd fuchsia.

A malformed fuchsia which came under my notice a few days ago has five stamens, two of which have become adnate to the pistil. The petals are purple, five in number, and apparently normal. The calyx consists of five sepals, and what is the limb in the normal flower has partially grown together. Fast to this limb, by one edge, have grown two bodies, apparently bracts. In each one the side which adheres is red, like the calyx, while the free half is green and sparingly serrate. At first I thought these bodies were sepals, but as they could be traced to the pedicel of the flower by a prominent line or ridge, I concluded them to be bracts.

W. A. PUCHNER.

*Chicago, Ill.*

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### Fragrance of flowers.

In regard to the effects of the fragrance of certain flowers upon certain people, of which I have observed several communications in the GAZETTE, I have never been able to sit in a room where lilacs form a bouquet, nor could I ever examine the flowers of the common milkweed, which grows so plentifully along the country roadsides. I have tried

many times when a young girl student, and in mature life, endeavoring to persuade myself that I could if I would, but the odor of both lilac and milkweed seems to place a band about my head, which, as regards the lilac, is bearable to a certain limit of politeness, if I am a guest in a house; but the effect of the milkweed is so intensified that I think I should lose consciousness if I persisted long in the inhalation. JULIA S. HOAG.

*Albany, N. Y.*

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#### Revision of N. Am. species of Fissidens.

On comparing the measurements of leaf-cells and spores in the species treated in my paper (this journal xii, 1887, p. 1) with those recently given by Limpricht,<sup>1</sup> I found mine so uniformly in excess that I was lead to re-examine the matter. As this remeasurement led to the same result as at first, I turned to a verification of the value assigned to the divisions of the eye-piece micrometer used. This value I found had been erroneously determined, being twenty-five per cent. greater than it should be. Those who have occasion to use these measurements are, therefore, requested to deduct one-fourth from them, *e. g.*,  $20\mu$  should read  $15\mu$ ;  $24\mu$  should be  $18\mu$ , and so on. C. R. BARNES.

*Madison, Wis., March 1, 1888.*

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#### An exchange herbarium.

An ideal botanical exchange is one through which one can obtain at any time any plant desired. At the New York meeting of the A. A. A. S. the Botanical Club appointed a committee, consisting of Dr. Geo. Vasey, Dr. N. L. Britton, Thomas Morong, Dr. S. Watson and Dr. B. D. Halsted, to consider the question of a botanical exchange for this country, and to organize one if thought desirable and practicable. Suggestions from each member of the committee have been secured, as well as from other botanists, and information has been obtained in regard to the Botanical Exchange Club of the British Islands. Direct information regarding a very successful German botanical exchange has for some reason failed to reach the committee, but some account of its methods of work has been learned from persons in this country who have obtained plants through it. An account of the workings of the British Exchange, together with suggestions for the management of one in this country, is given in the February numbers of the *Torrey Bulletin* and BOTANICAL GAZETTE.

There is a desire on the part of many that the exchange be located at Washington. The botanist of the Department of Agriculture has, therefore, consented to manage the exchange if so desired, and the Commissioner of Agriculture has granted space in the department building for the purposes of the exchange, and authorized the use of the duplicates belonging to the department herbarium. If the proposed exchange is organized on this basis, it will be practically an extension of the system of distribution heretofore carried on by the Department of Agriculture, and its management under special rules. In this case there would be no fees, and the interchange of specimens would be made through the mails free of postage. Persons desiring specimens could therefore be expected to contribute a liberal number in exchange for those desired, and thus quickly establish a stock from which nearly everything called for could

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<sup>1</sup> Die Laubmoose (Rabenh. Krypt.-Flora), p. 427 et seq.